

EQUAL JUSTICE

22 & 23 Mar, 2025

SPEAKER BIOS

LEVELLING THE SCALES: BAR ASSOCIATIONS AS CATALYSTS FOR GENDER EQUALITY



Prashant Kumar is the President, Bar Association of India and lawyer specialising in constitutional, commercial and civil matters, and international and domestic arbitral disputes. He is on the Board of Directors, International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC) which works to strengthen the rule of law, empower legal professionals and ensure equal access to justice. He is also the Past-President of LawAsia and the Convenor and Founding Member of the BRICS Legal Forum.



N. Krishnaveni is a Senior Advocate practicing at the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court with over three decades of experience appearing in original and appellate civil matters. She served as Secretary, Madurai Bench of Madras High Court Bar Association (MMBA) and President, Women Advocates' Association before becoming the first woman to be elected President of the MMBA in 2016. She is also an Honorary Vice-President of the All India Federation of Women Lawyers.



Anita Shekhar Castellino is a Counsel at the Bombay High Court with almost thirty years' experience. She is the Convenor, Interactive Lawyers Association of Women (ILAW), which was instrumental in demanding posts for women lawyers at the Bombay Bar Association. This led to the BBA passing a resolution in 2024 introducing 5 posts for women. She is currently serving as an Executive Committee Member, Bombay Bar Association.



Vivek Subba Reddy is a Senior Advocate at the High Court of Karnataka and twice-elected President of the Advocates' Association of Bangalore. A graduate of University Law College, Bangalore, he has thirty years' experience at the Bar, appearing in civil and commercial matters. He is also a National Media Spokesperson and member of the Bharatiya Janata Party.



Ms. Vibha Datta Makhija is a Senior Advocate at the Supreme Court of India. She graduated from Campus Law Centre, University of Delhi, and pursued an LL.M. from Georgetown University Law Centre before joining the bar in 1992. Her areas of practice include constitutional and criminal law, education law, arbitration, and insolvency laws. She was appointed Vice Chairperson of the National Anti-Doping Appellate Panel in 2019, and has also served as the Standing Counsel for the State of Madhya Pradesh from 2000-2013, and as a member of the National Legal Services Authority from 2013 to 2015. She led the effort to frame the Gender Sensitisation Rules and establish the Gender Sensitisation Committee at the Supreme Court.

JUSTICE IN NUMBERS: DATA-DRIVEN LAW REFORM



Prof (Dr.) Rangin P. Tripathy, is a Professor of Law at the National Law University of Odisha (NLUO). A law graduate of Utkal University, he went on to earn an LL.M from National Law School of India University Bangalore and a PhD in Law from NLUO. In 2020, he completed his Post-Doctoral Fellowship at Harvard Law School as a Fulbright Scholar. He is the Director, Centre for Public Policy, Law and Good Governance (CPPLGG), which launched the KHOJ (Know Your High Court Judges) dataset available on JusticeHub, an open-source data platform related to the Indian justice system.



Prof (Dr.) Aparna Chandra, is a Professor at the National Law School of India University, Bangalore (NLSIU) who specialises in constitutional law, human rights, gender and the law and judicial process reform. She is a co-convenor of the Indian Feminist Judgments Project and has authored books and articles focused on legal reforms, including Court on Trial: A Data-Driven Account of the Supreme Court of India.



Apoorv Anand is the Head of Data Operations at Data for India, a public platform that uses data from the Indian government and international agencies to produce insights and charts on socio-economic issues. Before his time with Data for India, he was the Data Team Lead at CivicDataLab. Apoorv has previously worked with the Know Your High Court Judges (KHOJ) project and JusticeHub.



Nithya Rhea Rajshekhar is a Senior Research Associate at the Centre for Law & Policy Research. She pursued her B.A, LL.B from WB National University of Juridical Sciences, Kolkata and went on to complete her LL.M from Columbia University, New York as a Human Rights Fellow. She has over 8 years of experience in litigation, having focused on public interest litigation and human rights with Lawyers Collective and in the Chambers of Senior Advocates Jayna Kothari and Anand Grover.



Disha Chaudhari is a Senior Research Associate at the Centre for Law & Policy Research. A graduate of Lady Sriram College and Faculty of Law, University of Delhi, she also went on to complete her L.L.M from Harvard Law School. Prior to CLPR, Disha she worked at Centre for Justice Law & Society at Jindal Global Law School, where she was the Assistant Director and also a teaching fellow from 2021-2023 and a Clinical Assistant Professor (2023-2024) with the Law & Marginalisation Clinic.

JUDICIAL DIVERSITY : REFLECTIONS FROM THE BENCH



Justice Ashok B. Hinchigeri is the Chairman, Law Commission of Karnataka and a former judge of the High Court of Karnataka. During his tenure as a judge, he was the Chairman of the Juvenile Justice Committee and served as Governor on the Board of the Karnataka Judicial Academy. In October 2024, Justice Hinchigeri was appointed to his present role as Chairman of the Law Commission of Karnataka.



Justice S. Sujatha is the Judicial Member, Central Administrative Tribunal, Bengaluru and former judge of the High Court of Karnataka. Prior to her elevation to the High Court, she practiced as an advocate, during which time she served as a High Court Government Pleader and Additional Government Advocate. She retired in May 2022. During her tenure, Justice Sujatha passed significant orders on the right to education, right of self-identification of transgender persons and the right to marry. In August 2022, she was appointed to her current position as Judicial Member, CAT, Bengaluru.



Justice Mukta Gupta served as a judge of the Delhi High Court from 2009 to 2023. She earned her law degree from Campus Law Centre, Delhi University, and joined the bar in 1984. Appointed as an Additional Public Prosecutor in 1993, she later became the Standing Counsel (Criminal) for the Government of NCT Delhi, prosecuting high-profile cases. She also represented the CBI as Special Counsel and was a member of the Delhi Legal Services Authority. As a judge, she delivered decisions on criminal, civil, commercial, and intellectual property law, as well as arbitration. She chaired the Delhi High Court's Juvenile Justice Committee. After retirement, she resumed practice as an advocate in the Supreme Court.



Jayna Kothari is a Senior Advocate and practices in the Supreme Court of India. She is also the founder and Executive Director of the Centre for Law and Policy Research, Bangalore. She graduated from University Law College with a B.A. LL.B degree and read the BCL at Oxford University. She was awarded the Wrangler D.C. Pavate Fellowship in Cambridge University. Her research and practice interests include constitutional law, gender and sexuality law, disability rights and discrimination law.

REPORTING JUSTICE: MEDIA'S ROLE IN HIGHLIGHTING THE GENDER GAP IN THE JUDICIARY



Vakasha Sachdev is a Senior Manager, Corporate Affairs at Logically, which focuses on combating disinformation and other online harms. He is a graduate of the National Law School of India University, Bangalore (NLSIU), and a qualified lawyer in both India and England. He left practice to become a journalist at The Quint, where he was the Associate Editor – Legal and reported on legal and political developments at the courts and in Parliament. He then joined Logically as its India Editorial Lead and helped launch its independent fact checking operation, Logically Facts, before transitioning to a policy role.



Apurva Vishwanath is the National Legal Editor at The Indian Express. She graduated with a B.A., LL. B (Hons) from Dr Ram Manohar Lohiya National Law University, Lucknow. Her focus areas include law, economic crimes, and legislative processes. In her current role, Apurva closely tracks judicial appointments and developments surrounding the judiciary. Prior to her role at the Indian Express, Apurva has worked with ThePrint and Mint.



Jyoti Yadav is an Assistant Editor at The Print. She has previously reported on the rise in the number of women judges in the lower judiciary in a series titled 'Women in Court'. For her investigative journalism, Jyoti has been awarded several accolades, including The Statesman Award for Rural Journalism in 2023 for her coverage of the Bihar Uterus Scam and the Ramnath Goenka award for reporting on the COVID-19 pandemic.



Gauri Kashyap is the Associate Editor at the Supreme Court Observer - a living archive of the Supreme Court of India. At SCO, Gauri leads a team of writers, editors and reporters that cover key Supreme Court cases. She has conducted workshops on the Supreme Court in schools, colleges and for the general public.